

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s)	Ulrich MEIER <i>et al.</i>	Confirmation:	3710
Serial No.	10/578,678	Art Unit	3679
Filed	May 9, 2006	Examiner	HEWITT, James M
For:	RAPID COUPLING		

AMENDMENT

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Official Office Action dated August 9, 2007, please amend the claims as indicated on the attached Claim Summary.

The Office Action indicated that the amendment to the specification did not meet the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.121(b). The amendment to the specifications specifically struck through the deleted portions and the added portions were underlined. This complies with 37 C.F.R. 1.121(b)(1)(ii). If the examiner disagrees, please provide specific indication of what portion of the regulations are not met.

The present application is a National Phase of a PCT application and the drawings are part of the file as submitted to the U.S. Office as a National Office. As a courtesy to the examiner, the applicant is providing a replacement page which has no modifications to the original PCT drawings.

Claims 12-13 are objected to and rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. Claim 12 has been amended to address these issues. Now Claims 12 and 13 are considered to meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112.

Claims 8 and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Yeoman. Claims 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Klein *et al.* These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In both of the rejections, the examiner indicates "it is unclear whether in an uncoupled state of the coupling, the compression spring pushes the nipple out of the sleeve to such an extent that the engagement section is outside the sleeve. Such is dependent upon such parameters as the elastic force of the compression spring, the weight of the pipe nipple, the frictional force between the pipe nipple and the socket, etc." (Page 5 Lines 3-7). The examiner then concluded that it would be obvious to design the spring to push the nipple out to the extent needed.

Claim 8 originally was considered to be sufficient. Amendment has been made to Claim 8 to emphasize that it is the position of the locking alignment and the engagement section and the strength of the compression strength are such that in an uncoupled state of the coupling, the compression spring pushes the nipple out of the sleeve to such an extent that the engagement section is outside the sleeve.

In Yeoman, the spring 86 determines the differential pressure which is needed to move the flow control member 14 away from the seat 20. To design this spring so as to push the nipple out may create a pressure differential which is unacceptable to control the valve. The spring in the present device is for urging the nipple out and it is not designed for flow differential respect to a valve seat. This proposition of the adaptation of Yeoman is the reconstruction of Yeoman to meet the present claim in hindsight instead of a logical extension.

In Klein, the purpose of spring 21 is to keep the seat 15 on the head 3. In the embodiment of Figure 5, the spring 21 is even removed and the seat 15 is increased in length. As indicated in the Paragraph in Column 2 beginning on Line 42, the dimension of the spring 21, the bushing 35, the collar 7, ring 33 and the juncture 41 are such that the spring 21 is not under compression until the head 3 is substantially inserted within the recessed 39. The spring 21 is designed to maintain a seal not to push the head 3 out of the body. Thus one cannot surmise that the small amount of compression shown in Figure 3 is sufficient to move the juncture 41 exterior through the body 9. The nonlocking connection shown in Figure 3 is the problem that the present application is addressing. This is not a locked position as shown in Figure 4.

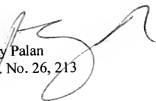
Thus Claim 8 is not considered to be obvious in view of either Yeoman or Klein et al. nor is the suggested modifications of obviousness in view of the prior art.

It should also be noted that the other dependent claims are allowable for their own distinct limitations.

It is respectfully requested that, if necessary to effect a timely response, this paper be considered as a Petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response and shortages in other fees be charged, or any overpayment in fees be credited, to the Barnes & Thornburg LLP Deposit Account No. 02-1010 (967/44780).

Respectfully submitted,

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP


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